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5 January 1971CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Cornell University is a high-tuition, private, coeducational university located in the city of Ithaca, New York, approximately 180 miles northwest of New York City. The current enrollment is in excess of 14,000 students, approximately 300 of whom are Negroes.

Student unrest and disruptive activities at Cornell began in the late 1960's. Although there is a chapter of SDS on campus and radical students have been involved in antiwar demonstrations including a recent effort to boycott Standard Oil, Cornell's principal problem and one that has resulted in violence and considerable destruction is one of a racial nature.

In 1965 Cornell, then under the direction of President James A. Perkins, recruited a significantly sizable group of black students who were financially as well as academically underprivileged. It was the belief at Cornell at the time that the university's action in underprivileged recruitment was a pioneer step that would lead other institutions along the same course. Cornell's racial problems have multiplied since then and have often taken on bizarre manifestations. Since 1968 the campus has been disrupted by ambush beatings of white students, armed building takeovers and serious arson. In the spring of 1968 Negro students seized and held a department chairman prisoner for what they believed to be a racial slight. Those students responsible went unpunished, and many believe a lack of firm discipline was an open invitation for acts of black militancy on an ever-increasing scale. Pushing a campaign for black studies, the militants in December 1968 took over a campus building, dispossessed into the streets the professors and their belongings, and stole furniture from other campus buildings. At faculty insistence, charges were brought against six of the most flagrant offenders, but in April 1969 all charges against them were dropped.

During a December 1968 demonstration black militants staged a sit-in outside President Perkins' office. Still believing he could make friends, Perkins sent milk and donuts to the demonstrators, and they responded by smashing the refreshments against the wall.

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In February 1969 under pressure from the Afro-American Society the administration scraped together \$1,700 for the purchase of bongo drums to be used in the celebration of Malcolm X Day. On 28 February to the accompaniment of Cornell-purchased drums, President Perkins was physically pulled from the speakers platform at a conference on South Africa.

In mid-March 1969 three white students were beaten at night on campus by Negro students. One of the three nearly died.

In late April 1969 Cornell gained the dubious distinction of being the first major American university to experience a building takeover by armed militants. This takeover allegedly was brought on by a cross being burned on the lawn of a black coed dormitory which was later suspected to have been started not by whites but by blacks.

The current president, Dr. Dale R. Corson, who assumed the leadership of the university a year ago has tried to tighten the disciplinary reins. He, as well as his predecessor, however, has had to contend with several radical faculty members including Professor Douglas F. Dowd, instructor Edward Boorstein (a Fidel Castro economic advisor from 1960-63), and the Rev. Daniel Berrigan, presently serving time in a Federal penitentiary for the burning of draft files in the state of Maryland.

In April of 1970 serious racial strife was again renewed with the arson burning of the Africana Studies and Research Center. Allegedly the building was burned to the ground destroying not only the physical structure but manuscripts and displays of African culture. It was presumed (by blacks) that the destruction had been wrought by hostile white students. In retaliation 100 black students (all members of the underprivileged enrollment group) smashed and looted the university-operated campus bookstore.

In summary, Cornell has been depicted as a place of fear and anger. Some talk of white vigilante groups has been reported; and it is anticipated that the school, quiet now for several months, will continue to be a potential focal point for racial tension in the academic world. No difficulties of any nature are anticipated at the Ithaca campus, however, until spring.

Dr. Corson will prove a tougher, more discipline-oriented administrator than his predecessor; and probably the worst of the racial tension is passed.